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ABSTRACT

This document summarizes a request by Franklin University of Columbus, Ohio to receive approval from the Illinois Board of Higher Education to operate and grant degrees statewide in Illinois. The vehicle through which it proposed to offer instruction was the Community College Alliance (CCA), a creation of the university designed to offer membership to community colleges nationwide, whereby they could become partners in providing community college graduates with baccalaureate completion opportunities via Internet courses. This document includes a discussion of the Board of Higher Education's criteria for approval, the qualifications of Franklin faculty, and a proposed organizational structure. A summary of the business administration curriculum is provided along with a list of participating Illinois community colleges. The CCA has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education as a Distance Education Demonstration Project, which allows the university to administer federal financial aid to students in any state. If the 5 planned degrees are approved in Illinois, Franklin estimates that in the first year of full operation, a total of 220 Illinois students will enroll in the programs, increasing to 1,000 students by the fifth year of operation. The report concludes with the Board of Higher Education staff recommending that the Board approve Franklin's request. (RC)

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ED 468 946

Item #6
April 4, 2000

STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY OF OHIO AND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ALLIANCE (CCA)

Submitted for: Action.

Summary: The Illinois Board of Higher Education has responsibility for administration of "The Private College Act" (110 ILCS 1005) and "The Academic Degree Act" (110 ILCS 1010). Under these statutes, new independent institutions, institutions planning to operate at a new location including a new off-campus site, and out-of-state institutions planning to operate in Illinois for the first time are required to obtain authorization to operate. These institutions also are required to obtain authorization for each new degree program.

In November 1999, Franklin University of Columbus, Ohio applied to operate and grant degrees statewide in Illinois. The vehicle through which it proposed to offer instruction was the Community College Alliance (CCA), a creation of the University designed to offer membership to community colleges nationwide, whereby they could become partners in providing community college graduates with baccalaureate completion opportunities. The programs that Franklin University offers through the CCA are designed to be offered on the campuses of member community colleges. The colleges and the University together designate a series of bridge courses for each major which graduates of associate degrees take prior to taking coursework in the major provided by the University. These courses are meant to provide students with additional support and to prepare them for further coursework in the major. The major coursework is then offered over the Internet and has been designed specifically for that medium.

Action Requested: That the Board of Higher Education approve Franklin University's application to operate and grant the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree statewide in Illinois.

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STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY OF OHIO AND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ALLIANCE (CCA)

Background and History. Franklin University was founded by the YMCA in 1902 and now has more than 28,000 alumni. In 1964, the relationship between the YMCA and the University ceased to exist and the University is now an independent, not-for-profit institution. The University enrolls approximately 6,000 students annually in baccalaureate and master's degree programs. More than 85 percent of the University's students are employed while attending classes. The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools accredits the University.

Program Description. Franklin University is seeking authority to operate statewide and to grant the B.S. in Business Administration. Franklin anticipates offering the B.S. in Health Services Administration, B.S. in Technical Administration, B.S. in Computer Science, and B.S. in Management Information Systems in Illinois as soon as the coursework for those degrees has been translated from face-to-face delivery to web-based delivery. These programs will be delivered through the Community College Alliance (CCA), a creation of the University designed to enable all associate degree graduates, including A.A.S. students, to complete baccalaureate degrees on community college campuses through the use of telecommunications. Each Franklin University program is outcomes-based, and each individual course has its own set of outcomes and assessment mechanisms. General education outcomes are assessed in the context of the professional foundation and major courses provided by the University. The Board staff will recommend approval of these four additional programs to the Board when they are completed and if they meet the Board's approval criteria.

Franklin University must meet Board of Higher Education approval criteria, including mission and objectives, academic control, curriculum, staffing, support services, and financial soundness. Board standards and approval are required because Franklin University wishes to establish a presence in Illinois by having home campus faculty and staff working with their counterparts on the community college campuses; were the program to be offered entirely via the Internet, without a physical presence in Illinois, it would be immune from the statutes under which the Board operates.

Through the creation of the Community College Alliance (CCA), Franklin University has expanded its mission and objective to include making "educational opportunities accessible through flexible delivery systems and schedules." While CCA offers additional opportunities and methodologies for completing degrees, it has not created a separate faculty devoted only to CCA students; the University's regular faculty have designed all courses in the major and related fields which they will offer over the Internet. Franklin's faculty at a minimum must have a degree beyond the level in which they are teaching, a standard common in higher education. Franklin faculty teaching in the CCA program also must have a minimum of five years of professional experience in the specific area which the course covers. In addition, all faculty teaching via the Internet must pass a Franklin University faculty development course in on-line learning before

being permitted to teach in the CCA programs. Thus, program courses are taught by faculty with both academic credentials and professional experience in the subject area, and knowledge of teaching methodology using the Internet as the medium of instruction.

The primary reason Franklin University falls under the Illinois statutes is that it will have an ongoing presence on the campuses of member institutions in the CCA. The University believes that an active and continuing relationship between not only home campus faculty and community college faculty and staff is desirable for program continuity, but also that student and support services are integral to a successful baccalaureate experience, particularly when using new technologies for instructional delivery. Regional directors will be employed by the University and will provide direct contact between students and each institution. In addition to support services provided by community college members of the CCA, the Regional Director provides support for students from the point of admission through graduation. Franklin's Teaching and Learning Resource Center is available on-line to students who find that they may need tutoring or other support during their tenure with Franklin. As part of membership commitment in CCA, community colleges provide facilities, library resources and computing support for CCA students. Additional library materials will be available on-line for students at CCA member institutions.

The tuition rate that Franklin University currently charges for the business administration program is $212 per credit hour, a rate somewhat lower than the $300 per hour at DePaul University, $350 at Greenville College, or $245 to $375 at McKendree College (approximations based on specific major fields of study and type of attendance). In return for their partnership in the CCA, Franklin University will provide ten percent of the tuition for Franklin courses to the member community colleges.

Franklin University Board of Trustees has allocated $4.5 million to be used over 18 months to fully implement the Community College Alliance. The Alliance currently employs 14 full-time-equivalent staff including a director, four course designers, three regional directors assigned to work with participating community colleges, a student services coordinator, a webmaster, and a marketing professional. These individuals work with University faculty to develop and maintain the integrity of coursework as it is translated into web-based format. The professional foundations and major courses will be delivered via the Internet in a web-based format.

The design of Franklin's CCA programs builds on coursework taken in A.A., A.S., and A.A.S. programs. There are then four major areas in which community college students must take coursework to meet the requirements for completion of the B.S. in Business Administration: bridge courses; electives; professional foundation courses; and major courses. The University and the colleges jointly will designate bridge courses for students that would be taught by adjunct faculty of the University, in many cases, qualified faculty of the community colleges.

Bridge courses will be offered by community colleges and fill the gap between associates degrees and study in the major. Bridge courses provide additional general education, electives commonly found in all baccalaureate degrees, and a core of business courses which cover topics such as financial accounting, managerial accounting, principles of management, principles of finance, business law, and marketing. Generally, these courses will constitute between 20 and 24 credits beyond the associate's degree and will be offered by the community colleges. Franklin will work with the individual community college partners in CCA to select bridge courses necessary for each student. Franklin University has been apprised of the Illinois Articulation Initiative and in the future a common set of bridge courses acceptable to both Franklin and the

colleges could be a reality, thereby defraying the cost of designating unique bridge courses at each college.

Professional foundation courses offered by Franklin will cover topics such as business communication for the 21st century, applied quantitative methods, global cultures, and organizational decision-making. Courses in the major build upon the bridge and professional foundation courses and comprise business decisions, current issues in business ethics, improving organizational performance, organizational behavior, global management, management of information systems, telecommunications for managers, and further study in the areas of management and marketing.

CCA students would have access to all the facilities and resources of the community college, including advising and counseling, while completing bridge and major coursework. Thus, students from CCA member institutions may complete the baccalaureate degree 'on-campus' at their home community college campuses. Of the total of 124 hours required for completion of the baccalaureate degree, 40 must be taken 'in residence' from Franklin University and must be professional foundations and major courses.

To date, about one-fourth of Illinois community colleges have joined CCA including College of Lake County, Elgin Community College, McHenry County College, Black Hawk College, Illinois Valley Community College, Parkland College, Southeastern Illinois College, Shawnee Community College, and the four colleges of the Illinois Eastern Community Colleges district. The CCA expects to enlist additional two-year college partners in the future. Put simply, students who complete associate degrees at community colleges could remain there to complete their baccalaureate degrees in the disciplines noted above. In addition to being offered at community colleges in Ohio, programs have been adopted by all the community colleges in Colorado and CCA also is operating in Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and North Carolina.

Franklin University's CCA has been selected by the US Department of Education as a Distance Education Demonstration Project which allows the University to administer federal financial aid to students in any state, not only in Ohio. Thus, students enrolled in Franklin's CCA programs will have access to federal financial aid even though their coursework is taken via the Internet. If the five planned degrees are approved in Illinois, Franklin estimates that in the first year of full operation, a total of 220 Illinois students will enroll, increasing to 1,000 students by the fifth year of operation.

Staff Conclusion and Recommendation. The staff believes that Franklin University and its proposed Bachelor of Science in Business Administration meet the criteria in Sections 1030.30 and 1030.60 of the rules to implement "The Private College Act" (110 ILCS 1005) and "The Academic Degree Act" (110 ILCS 1010).

The staff recommends adoption of the following resolution:

The Board of Higher Education hereby grants to Franklin University of Columbus, Ohio, the Certificate of Approval and Authorization to Operate statewide in Illinois and further grants Authorization to Grant the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration statewide, subject to the conditions which were presented in its application and which form the basis upon which these authorizations are granted.

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